

Procedure #7400
Category: Non-Instructional Operations
Title: <b>STUDENT NUTRITION PROGRAM</b>
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Reviewers: MSA Food Services Director; MSA Instructional Leadership Team (MSAD/MSAB Directors/Assistant Director; MSAD/MSAB Dorm Directors; MSA Director of Student Support Services; MSA Superintendent)

**PURPOSE**

This procedure is to define the student nutrition program at the Minnesota State Academies and establish clear expectations for meals and snacks provided by the Food Services department.

**OVERVIEW**

Following rules and regulations, the student nutrition program is designed to meet expectations set forth by the National Breakfast (NBSP) and National Lunch (NLSP) Program and provides meals consistent with the USDA dietary guidelines. The Minnesota State Academies has established the following expectations for our student nutrition program. MSA will:

- offer meals and snacks that students will consume and enjoy eating.
- solicit input and feedback on meals and snacks from students.
- meet any special nutritional needs as identified and prescribed by a physician.
- provide nutritional meals that follows all requirements of the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs
- utilize the cafeteria as a learning environment for teaching students about good nutrition principles.
- be a resource for students, teachers, and other staff regarding healthy eating and wellness.
- Meet the standards for meal service and sanitation as established by the Minnesota Department of Health, following rules for Food and Beverage Establishments.

**PROCEDURES**

**STAFF EATING WITH STUDENTS:**

Staff members who are assigned to eat with students do so for the purpose of supervising and teaching the social value of meals. Staff members should sit among students rather than sitting separately at a table with other staff members. Staff members must be cognizant of the actions and behaviors of all students, even though

they may be specifically assigned to one student. Staff members can teach the social value of meals by:

- Showing good table manners and being a good role model to the students, including modeling healthy eating/drinking habits.
- Helping students understand the value of good nutrition and the need for certain foods.
- Demonstration of personal interest in students and support for language/cognitive development through appropriate conversations at the table.
- Showing support for student safety and security – providing a safe space for students.
- Working with students who follow unhealthy food fads or those who have special dietary needs to help them learn about healthy eating habits.
- Minimizing disruptions to mealtimes by correcting inappropriate behaviors/actions.
- Providing a positive environment in the cafeteria/food tray line by making positive comments about the food being provided during that meal. Valid criticism of food options can be handled with discretion through discussion with the Food Services Director or the cook coordinator.

**MENU CHANGES:**

Menus are subject to change – these changes may be due to different factors including insufficient supply of food items or a more efficient use of food products. The Food Services Director or Cook Coordinator will inform staff/students about any menu changes as soon as possible.

**SPECIAL DIET MANUAL:**

A special diet manual that includes additional information on special diets for individual students can be reviewed with the Food Services Director.

Special diet restrictions/instructions must be submitted to the cafeteria as soon as possible. Orders must be prescribed by a doctor within a letter with details regarding special diet instructions and/or restrictions. The medical statement should include a description of the child's physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the Food Services Director to understand how it restricts the child's diet. This should also include an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the disability. In the case of food allergies, this means identifying the food or foods to be omitted and recommending alternatives.

**REMOVAL OF FOOD AND UTENSILS FROM THE CAFETERIA:**

No silverware, dishes, or food (except for fresh fruit) can be taken from the cafeteria by students or staff without prior approval.

Upon approval from the Director of each campus, students who cannot eat in the cafeteria during the breakfast meal due to identified special needs may receive a boxed meal or alternative meals/snacks in the school building/classroom. Students will still be subject to Procedure #7401 (Meal and Milk Ticket Purchasing). This does not include regularly scheduled lunchtime meals for young toddlers provided in the school building.

**FOOD IN THE CAFETERIA:**

The Food Services Director will establish rules for outside food that is allowed in the cafeteria and review those rules with students/staff periodically. Students and staff may bring meals/drinks from home to be consumed during mealtimes and will be encouraged to make healthy choices. Current restrictions for food in the cafeteria include:

- No Gum
- No Pop
- No Fast Food (i.e., McDonalds; Burger King; Taco Bell; Dairy Queen; etc.) Deli sandwiches or pizza are acceptable.
- Students/Staff cannot share food from home with other students due to possible food allergies/dietary restrictions.

**ABSENCE FROM MEALS:**

Any absence from a meal by an individual student or a group of students must be communicated in advance to the Food Services Director. 48 hours of advance notice (for more than 5 students) is preferred, and the absence must be approved by the supervisor of that department. This communication must include the name(s) of students and the date/meal that will be missed. Last minute cancellations or schedule changes may mean that students cannot be fed in the cafeteria. Alternate arrangements will have to be made to ensure that students get fed elsewhere.

If students will be late for meals, staff members must communicate with the cafeteria as soon as possible. Food will be saved for students no more than ½ hour after the scheduled mealtime. Otherwise, staff members should arrange for a boxed meal (see below).

## **SPECIAL FOOD REQUESTS**

Requests for food and/or meals for field trips, athletic trips, and/or other events must be submitted to their supervisor for approval. Supervisors will forward the approved requests to the Food Services Director. Plans must be made at least 14 days in advance. Each request should include the following:

- Date
- Department
- Number of People (include a roster of students and staff)
- Grade level of students/group
- Time of pick-up or delivery (if delivery is needed, include location for delivery)
- Food and Drink items desired
- Utensils and non-food items needed.
- Special diet requirements
- If students/staff will be absent from a regularly scheduled meal (indicate which day/meal)

Staff requesting boxed meals for events such as meetings with students (up to 5 students) during mealtime must make those requests 24 hours in advance, including a roster of students who will be participating in those events. It is strongly encouraged that meetings that involve larger groups of students be held in the cafeteria (or in a meeting room close to the cafeteria) to eliminate the need for boxed meals. Last minute requests may be denied, depending on the workload of the cafeteria staff.

If a group of students needs to eat at a time other than the regularly scheduled mealtimes, they must be accompanied to the cafeteria by the person(s) in charge of the arrangements and/or the group. This must be communicated with the cafeteria staff at least 24 hours in advance.

Food containers, utensils, and extra food should be returned to the cafeteria immediately after the event.

Late requests may be refused or substituted if there is not enough time to order food supplies or if the workload on the cafeteria staff is too large. The cafeteria staff will notify the requester if any substitutions are made.

Dorm food supplies must be ordered by Thursday morning for delivery during the following week.